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Official Records

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Monday, 17 October 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 14 (*continued*)

Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Agency (A/49/297 and Corr.1)

Draft resolution (A/49/L.2)

Mr. Albin (Mexico) *(interpretation from Spanish):* My delegation has taken note of the report introduced by Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), on the work done by the Agency in the course of 1993. We are grateful for the additional information he provided on the most important developments since the issuance of the report. We are grateful to him for a job well done.

My country has always supported the Agency's work in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and to fostering multilateral technical cooperation in this area. We hail the valuable work being done in the area of nuclear safety, the application of safeguards and verification - key factors in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons.

The report before us gives a detailed account of the activities being carried out in the various areas of its mandate. We have noted, as in earlier years, that distinct priority has apparently been given to the application of safeguards and verification. International cooperation for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and its technologies, which we regard as a primary goal of the Agency, seems now to be relegated to a secondary level. Striking a better balance between these activities is essential, especially in the light of the pressing needs of a large number of developing countries in the fields of energy, human health, the environment and agriculture, among others.

The international non-proliferation regime was without question strengthened by the full incorporation of Argentina, Brazil and Chile into the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Furthermore, the announcement by the Government of Cuba of its intention to sign and ratify this instrument in the near future will make it possible to quickly achieve the goal shared by my country and others in the region: making Latin America and the Caribbean the first region in the world free of nuclear weapons. In this context, of particular note is the coming into force of the quadripartite safeguards agreement concluded among Argentina, Brazil, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC) and the IAEA.

This was no easy task, but the hard work, perseverance and conviction of the countries of the region have brought us to the end of a process that some viewed with sympathy and others with incredulity.

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It is Mexico's wish to see all States Members of the United Nations comply with the obligations inherent in the United Nations Charter, the statutes of the IAEA and the agreements deriving from it. Mexico's commitment in this respect is plain and simple: to rid the Earth of the nuclear threat. My delegation trusts that reason and dialogue will prevail in solving differences of view in the area of security and safeguards.

There is a pressing need to devise and implement new measures to bolster the safeguards regime before the review and extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In order to ensure applicability, this package of measures should explicitly and clearly spell out the financial and legal implications needed to put it into practice. Here we need to recall once again that for a strengthened safeguards system to be truly effective, it must be binding, universally accepted and non-discriminatory.

At the same time, there is an urgent need to step up technical assistance and cooperation activities, in accordance with Article 2 of the Agency's statute. To this end, we must devise and put into operation a mechanism to ensure that resources are available to finance these activities on a continuing and stable basis. My Government is concerned about the meagre level of resources in the fund for technical assistance and cooperation, hence our fervent appeal to all countries to make their contributions as early as possible.

Current international circumstances urgently require that the normative bodies of the IAEA, in particular the Board of Governors, be adapted. If the Board is to be truly effective and representative, it must take into account and reflect the level of development achieved by Member States in the nuclear area as well as the increase in the membership of the Agency as a result of world-wide political changes and the emergence of new countries, particularly in Eastern and Central Europe. It also seems essential that greater transparency be achieved in the process of appointing Member States to the Board.

We also consider it useful to realistically explore the functions that the Agency might possibly perform in the area of verification in the field of disarmament, in particular in the context of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty (TBT) and an agreement banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Mr. Starr (Australia): I should like to express appreciation to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Hans Blix, for his comprehensive and well-balanced report analysing the operation of the Agency over the last year. The report clearly demonstrates that the Agency has continued to fulfil its responsibilities, as provided for in its statute and in the resolutions of the General Conference and of the Board of Governors.

As one of the founding members, Australia has long been a strong and active supporter of the IAEA. The Agency's contributions to global security, through the effective operation of a safeguards system, and to global development through peaceful nuclear cooperation, are substantial and valuable. These contributions deserve the continuing support of the international community.

The Director General and the staff of the Secretariat are to be commended for their efforts and personal devotion to the tasks of adapting the Agency to the fundamental changes and new challenges of our time. These efforts are reflected in the achievements of the Agency over the past year. First, there are the important measures which have been taken to strengthen safeguards, notably through the work of the "93 plus two" programme, which is examining ways of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the safeguards system.

Secondly, important developments have taken place in the field of technical cooperation. Australia participated in the successful technical-cooperation policy review seminar in Vienna in September, and the outcomes of that seminar will have important implications for the efficient use of the Agency's technical-cooperation resources.

Thirdly, and finally, there was the conclusion of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, to which Australia has become a signatory.

The Agency, in our view, has also responded commendably to new developments in the nuclear field. In particular, we note the Agency's role in strengthening international cooperation against trafficking in nuclear materials and its potential role in verifying new arms-control arrangements, such as a cut-off in nuclear production.

The Australian Government regrets the decision of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to withdraw from the IAEA. We encourage the Democratic People's

Republic of Korea to reconsider that decision and urge it to cooperate fully with the Agency. We strongly desire to see this issue resolved soon and in such a way as to result in the full implementation of safeguards and contribute to peace and stability on the Korean peninsula.

Turning now to this year's draft resolution, I note that the text, which follows closely the resolution adopted last year, is, in our view, balanced and reflects the views of the Agency membership, as expressed in resolutions of the General Conference. Importantly, the efforts of the negotiators of the draft resolution in Vienna have been respected through the maintenance of language adopted by the Board of Governors and the General Conference.

We have a common interest in seeing the maintenance and strengthening of the IAEA and the protection and development of its activities which promote the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Australia's co-sponsorship of this resolution reflects our firm support for this shared objective.

Mr. Chong-Ha Yoo (Republic of Korea): On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Korea, I would like to express appreciation to Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for introducing so capably the IAEA annual report. I would also like to extend our support to him and his staff in the secretariat for their dedicated efforts and achievements in the IAEA's various activities during the past 12 months.

The reinforcement of a global non-proliferation regime continues to be an essential requirement not only for ensuring stability in today's world but also in shaping a new world order built on peace and security. Over the past several years, the international community has substantially increased its awareness of the vital importance of an effective global nuclear non-proliferation regime, with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and IAEA safeguards at its core.

The recent increase in the number of parties to the NPT to 165 States, including all nuclear-weapons States, is a highly encouraging development. We also welcome the initiatives taken by the African States for the establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the region. We earnestly hope that the international community can build upon these positive developments and carry out constructive discussions which will lead to the indefinite extension of the NPT beyond 1995.

However, new problems have arisen which present serious challenges to the NPT regime and its safeguards system. The non-compliance of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with the NPT safeguards obligations and some incidents of illicit nuclear-material trafficking in Europe are cases requiring the renewed efforts of the international community towards the strengthening of the NPT regime and its safeguards system.

Given the pivotal role of the IAEA safeguards system in ensuring an effective NPT regime, my delegation would like to reiterate its full support for the safeguards activities of the Agency, particularly its efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the safeguards system and to enhance its responsiveness.

In this connection, my delegation welcomes the Agency secretariat's initiative to develop "Programme '93+2', which provides for the assessment, development and testing of recommendations submitted by the Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation in 1993 and other potential measures for strengthening and improving the existing safeguards system. While recognizing that the measures considered in the Programme are broad in scope and diverse in nature, we sincerely hope that the Agency secretariat's concrete proposals resulting from the Programme can be submitted in the near future for in-depth consideration by the international community.

My Government is deeply concerned about surplus plutonium and highly enriched uranium and is alarmed by recent press reports on illicit trafficking in nuclear materials. We strongly support the early establishment of a regime on international storage and management of surplus fissionable materials and encourage the Agency to take a leading role in pursuit of this regime. We welcome the initiatives taken by the European Union to enable the IAEA to discuss this important issue.

The promotional activities of the Agency are also important, as one of its main activities under its statute.

We continue to support the strengthening of the Agency's technical assistance and cooperation programmes, particularly the transfer of nuclear technology to developing countries. In this regard, we would like to commend the IAEA's increased efforts to secure predictable and assured resources for these programmes and to place special emphasis on the model projects.

We deeply appreciate the Agency's contributions in the promotion of international cooperation in the field of nuclear safety and radioactive-waste management. The Convention on Nuclear Safety, which was recently signed in Vienna, will open a new era of international cooperation for the enhanced safety of nuclear-power plants, and my Government is ready to make all possible contributions for its full implementation.

Radioactive-waste management has emerged as one of the most difficult and complex challenges in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Despite proven technologies and practices for safe management of radioactive waste, this problem remains a politically sensitive issue, and more efforts are therefore required to change public perception on this matter.

In this regard, my delegation wishes to commend the Agency's initiatives to promote the Radioactive Waste Safety Standards (RADWASS) programme. We note with satisfaction that agreement has almost been reached on safety fundamentals and is awaiting approval at the December meeting of the IAEA's Board. My delegation is pleased to recall that during the thirty-eighth General Conference of the IAEA a resolution on the RADWASS programme was adopted, having been promoted by the Korean delegation and fully endorsed by the Group of 77.

As a new contracting party to the 1972 London Convention, the Republic of Korea sincerely hopes that the unlawful practice of radioactive-waste dumping in the sea, particularly in the East Sea in our area, will cease henceforth. The secretariat of the IAEA is invited to continue its valuable contribution in this respect.

A major challenge to the NPT regime and the IAEA safeguards system is the nuclear issue relating to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The suspicions surrounding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear programme should be completely cleared up by securing the past, present and future transparency of its nuclear activities. For this reason, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should fully cooperate with the IAEA in the implementation of the safeguards agreement, which is still in force.

I wish to take this opportunity to commend the Director General and his staff, including the inspectors, for their patience and impartial efforts to discharge their responsibilities under exceptionally difficult circumstances.

If the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea fulfils its obligations in good faith, we will do all we can to assist it in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Depending on the resolution of the nuclear issue, the Republic of Korea stands ready to make its technological and capital resources available for the DPRK's overall economic development in a spirit of mutual prosperity.

In closing, my delegation would like to reiterate the importance it attaches to the IAEA and express my Government's firm commitment to the Agency's objectives and our support for its essential role in the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. That is why my delegation joined other delegations in co-sponsoring the draft resolution contained in document A/49/L.2. My delegation hopes that it will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Dimitrov (Bulgaria): The Bulgarian delegation joins other delegations in expressing appreciation to Mr. Hans Blix and the staff of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the competence and efficiency with which the important functions of the Agency are carried out. We are grateful to the Director General for the annual report and his comprehensive statement on the work of the IAEA. At this juncture, I would also like to express the satisfaction of the Government of Bulgaria with the results of the Director General's recent visit to Bulgaria.

I would also like to express our satisfaction with the fact that the IAEA is viewed as one of the most effective United Nations agencies, as was reaffirmed by the Geneva Group evaluation exercise earlier this year. During the reporting period the IAEA continued to play a vital role in ensuring the peaceful use of nuclear energy and securing the stable functioning of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The efforts aimed at upholding and strengthening this regime are central to maintaining and further enhancing international peace and security. The Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the regime established by it are not only a fundamental instrument to maintain international security, but also a solid basis for a verifiable framework for peaceful cooperation between States Parties.

As we prepare for the Treaty's 1995 Review and Extension Conference, it is appropriate to reiterate that Bulgaria supports the achievement of its universality and complete implementation, and advocates its indefinite and

unconditional extension. We urge all States that have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty and to conclude full-scope safeguards agreements with the IAEA.

There can be confidence in the international non-proliferation regime only when States are completely transparent with regard to their nuclear activities. Full cooperation with the IAEA, which administers the nuclear non-proliferation system on behalf of the international community, is essential. The right of the Agency to perform special inspections where necessary must be upheld. As a last resort, the backing of the Security Council may be needed.

Recognizing the outstanding role of the Agency in the implementation of the NPT, we are pleased to note that the recent third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 1995 NPT Conference expressed high appreciation for IAEA's activities in preparing this important event.

The Republic of Bulgaria continues to attach great importance to the interrelationship of the Agency's main activities - safeguards, safety and technology transfer. Ensuring the safety of nuclear installations, managing radioactive waste, promoting various applications of nuclear technology and providing technical assistance - all these activities depend on the confidence that nuclear energy and technology are used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Bulgaria supports the Agency's programme for a strengthened and more cost-effective safeguards system, which, in our view, should be capable of providing reliable assurances of the peaceful nature of the nuclear activities of States, including the detection of undeclared materials. The Agency's role in this field is of increasing importance in the context of recent developments regarding the nuclear issue concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

A new and potentially disquieting challenge to the international community, as well as to the non-proliferation regime, causing safety and environmental concerns, is the illicit trafficking of nuclear materials. We believe that while it is the responsibility of States to ensure adequate and effective physical protection of nuclear material, the IAEA can play a valuable role in facilitating international cooperation, including the provision of technical assistance to countries in the non-law-enforcement-related field, or by establishing an international register of fissile materials.

Bulgaria views the IAEA as the principal international forum for the exchange of safety-related information. We believe that nuclear safety worldwide would be enhanced through combining national measures and international cooperation in this area. Bulgaria participated actively in the elaboration of an international, legally binding instrument based on fundamental principles for the regulation and management of safety and for the operation of nuclear installations. It was on this understanding that Bulgaria signed the Convention on Nuclear Safety at the last session of the General Conference of the IAEA.

Radioactive waste is another topical issue for my delegation. We support the elaboration of an international convention on the safety of radioactive waste management, once the ongoing process of formulating waste management safety fundamentals has resulted in a broad international agreement. In our view, the convention should be as wide as possible in scope, including civil as well as military waste. The international civil liability regime for nuclear damage is one of the elements of the system of international instruments already elaborated or currently under elaboration by the IAEA.

The prevention of nuclear accidents has to be a top priority for individual States and for the international community as a whole. It is also essential to establish a generally acceptable, predictable and effective liability regime with broad participation in order to provide prompt and fair compensation for nuclear damage. The delegation of Bulgaria would like to inform the Assembly that by a law dated 27 July 1994 the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria has ratified the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and the Joint Protocol on the application of the Vienna Convention and the Paris Convention. Under a supplementary provision of that law, Bulgaria will apply the Vienna Convention as of the day of its ratification before its formal entry into force.

Technology transfer, which is one of the IAEA's major activities, is of great interest to my country. The numerous beneficiaries of the technical cooperation programs, Bulgaria among them, testify to the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Nuclear power remains the sole alternative for meeting Bulgaria's needs for electric power. Over the period from 1974 to 1993 six Kozloduy power units, designed and furnished by the former USSR, were put into operation consecutively. Between 1991 to 1994 large-scale activities, aimed at

enhancing the safety of the four reactors of the older model, have been carried out; the work includes a special programme for reconstruction and upgrading of the reactors. The programme elaborated under IAEA recommendations, was partially funded by the Commission of the European Union through urgent assistance under the "PHARE" Programme.

Thirty-seven Bulgarian companies and institutes and more than 20 companies from the United States of America, the Russian Federation, Germany, France, Belgium, Finland, Spain, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic participated in the implementation of the programme. A consortium of regulatory bodies and independent expert organizations of member States of the European Union has been set up to render technical and expert assistance to the Bulgarian regulatory body in the field of the safe use of nuclear energy and in licensing the units after their restructuring and upgrading.

The Kozloduy nuclear-power plant is a successful example of efficient international cooperation aimed at solving safety-related problems. The coordinating role of the IAEA in this cooperation is of paramount importance and we intend to develop nuclear power further while strictly observing safety rules and in close cooperation with the Agency.

I should like to express the deep gratitude of the Bulgarian Government to the IAEA, the European Commission, other international institutions and the Governments of friendly States for their help, which has guaranteed the reliable and safe operation of our nuclear-power-generating capacities.

In parallel with efforts aimed at further improving the safety of our nuclear-power plants, we will continue to broaden the application of nuclear methods in other areas, such as agriculture and medicine. We will rely on the assistance of the Agency in the implementation of specific projects in these areas. For its part, Bulgaria will do its best to contribute to the successful implementation of the Agency's programmes for technical assistance and cooperation.

In conclusion, allow me once again to express the high appreciation and unreserved support of the Bulgarian Government for the role and activities of the Agency in promoting international cooperation in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and in efficient control over the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chirila (Romania): The report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for 1993, complemented by the very important introductory statement by Director General Hans Blix on the Agency's activities in 1993, offers a reassuring image of the outstanding role played by the IAEA in the development of international cooperation for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Agency's work and initiatives, carefully pondered and developed, deserve full recognition and support.

The Romanian Government is grateful to the Agency and its member States possessing high technology in the peaceful application of nuclear energy for the various forms of assistance they have provided. For our programme on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, supported by such high-level technology as the Canadian deuterium-uranium reactors, perfectly transparent international cooperation is essential. We give high priority to the Agency's activities in applying safeguards to the peaceful uses of nuclear power. Thus, my Government subscribes to the guidelines of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group and to those relating to the transfer of nuclear technologies and materials, including those with a dual use.

The peaceful uses of nuclear energy continue to be faced with serious challenges. Despite some discouraging signs, positive trends towards the establishment of a genuinely universal nuclear non-proliferation regime have continued over the past two years. All nuclear-weapon States are now parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). South Africa has abandoned its nuclear-weapons programme, thus offering prospects for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone on the African continent. Latin America is also emerging as a nuclear-weapon-free continent. In view of the 1995 NPT review and extension Conference, these facts are very promising. May I reiterate, in this context, that Romania is deeply interested in and committed to achieving the universality of the NPT and supports the unconditional and indefinite extension of this Treaty. We urge all States that have not yet done so to become parties to the NPT and to conclude full-scope safeguards agreements with the IAEA.

The activities and decisions of the recent IAEA General Conference offer a meaningful picture of the responsibilities assumed and action taken by the Agency in carrying out its mandate for promoting the

non-proliferation regime. Important resolutions and decisions were adopted on such specific issues as strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system; the implementation of the agreement between the Agency and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the application of safeguards in connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa; the implementation of Security Council resolutions 687 (1991), 707 (1991) and 715 (1991) relating to Iraq; the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East; and measures against illicit trafficking in nuclear material.

Romania is very appreciative of the work done so far by the Agency and its recent additional steps towards a strengthened and more cost-effective safeguards system. The purpose of such an endeavour is clear: to make the safeguards system more capable of covering both declared and undeclared activities, thus providing sufficiently convincing assurances for all States about the exclusively peaceful nature of the nuclear programmes of other States.

An important additional serious challenge to the international non-proliferation system is the illicit traffic in nuclear material. Here, in our opinion, urgent domestic and international action is necessary. We support the idea of establishing an international register for fissile material. An emerging IAEA task relevant to this context would be to facilitate the exchange of safety-related information.

The outstanding role of the Agency in the implementation of basic provisions of the NPT were once again acknowledged on the occasion of the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 1995 review and extension Conference, at which the Agency's work in preparing this important event was highly appreciated.

In a world which needs energy and is at the same time concerned about the risks of environmental deterioration, high priority must be given to nuclear safety and radiation protection. The expanded nuclear-safety programme, which was adopted after the Chernobyl accident, has had positive effects.

We continue to be seriously concerned over the status of certain old nuclear reactors situated in our region. The IAEA has made remarkable efforts to assess and improve their safety and we hope that these efforts will continue.

As for us, the Romanian Government wishes to reaffirm its determination to complete the Cernavoda nuclear-power plant while strictly complying with international safety standards. Romania is already a party to the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and the Joint Protocol relating to the application of the Vienna and Paris Conventions. At the last session of the IAEA General Conference, my country signed the Convention on Nuclear Safety. We support the idea of a special convention on the safety of radioactive waste.

Draft resolution A/49/L.2, sponsored by a large number of delegations, including my own, reflects in an adequate and balanced manner the state of affairs in such a responsible and sensitive area as that of the IAEA activities. Recent, and especially future, challenges for the Agency and its member States are reflected in this document. We hope that it will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Adekanye (Nigeria): On behalf of the delegation of Nigeria, I wish to thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for his introductory statement highlighting the Agency's achievements in the past year, as well as the challenges it faces in the coming years. Those achievements detailed in the annual report for 1993 reflect the widespread support for the Agency's programmes among Member States. They reflect also the continuing commitment of Mr. Hans Blix and his able staff to the goals of the Agency, for which we are equally grateful.

Nigeria has followed with keen interest the gradual strengthening of the Agency's technical-cooperation activities in pursuit of the original "Atoms for Peace" vision which underlay its establishment. The Agency has consolidated those activities through the application of molecular techniques in areas as varied as insect eradication, potable-water development and water-resources management, and genetic improvement of food crops. It has expanded the horizons of nuclear techniques through food irradiation and is now in the process of placing great emphasis on staple foods, as part of a joint effort with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to strengthen food security in developing countries, including those in Africa. Its contributions in the areas of medicine and industry have enhanced the development of indigenous capabilities in applied radiation biology and radiotherapy and strengthened the scientific and technological content of industry in recipient countries. Trainees in the Agency's Seibersdorf laboratory have become counterparts in technical-cooperation projects.

It is reassuring to observe that, in response to the requests of Member States, the formulation of the Agency's technical-assistance programme is now based on their national development priorities and is in consonance with the demands of sustainable development and environmental protection. The technical-cooperation model project concept, warmly embraced by Member States, symbolizes the new orientation that should ensure more tangible benefits from nuclear techniques for developing countries. The fact that these efforts to implement technical assistance projects are being pursued in close collaboration with other agencies, including the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization (WHO), is a source of great satisfaction, as is the attempt to address the specific needs of vulnerable groups in the area of human health and nutrition. They merit great support.

The expansion of the Agency's desirable role would be hampered without adequate resources. The case for more secure and assured funding for those activities has never been in doubt. A growing awareness of the need in the post-cold-war era to shift the focus away from proliferation to peaceful uses of nuclear energy calls for the political will to place those activities on a firmer footing. In urging Member States to cooperate in identifying more meaningful ways of funding technical-cooperation activities, we wish to join the appeal for more pledges to the Technical Assistance and Cooperation Fund and for payments to be made in full and in a timely manner.

Permit me, in this connection, to place on record our appreciation to a number of Africa's development partners that have continued to fund projects identified under the African Regional Cooperation Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA). The increased participation, as observers, of some important donor countries in the last AFRA meeting, in Rabat, Morocco, last April, gives us hope that more States members of the Agency will join us in the fulfilment of AFRA's objectives.

As a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), my country highly values the Agency's safeguards role in sustaining trust and confidence in the non-proliferation regime. That is why we have provided unflinching support to the Agency in its efforts to ensure that non-proliferation undertakings made by NPT States parties under safeguards agreements are complied with. We are pleased to note that in the course of the year, except for one instance, safeguards agreements in force in 116 Member States, of which 100 are States parties to the NPT, performed satisfactorily. We commend the professionalism with which the Agency's inspectors carried out these tasks, and hereby reiterate our conviction that clear and unambiguous support for the Agency's safeguards system and the fulfilment of commitments thereunder remain essential in strengthening regional peace and stability.

Inevitably, the increased membership of the Agency, the process of disarmament, and regional non-proliferation needs will impose additional responsibilities on the safeguards system. We are encouraged to note that, in anticipation of this development, new approaches are already being considered by the Board of Governors. Also, proposals under a new programme - "Programme '93+2'" - which is the result of a recommendation of the Director General's Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation (SAGSI), are now undergoing trial tests in selected countries. Focusing on the efficiency and effectiveness of safeguards practices, those proposals, when implemented, would strengthen transparency and openness.

Nigeria's active participation in the regional efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa is predicated on our abiding commitment to non-proliferation in our region and in the world at large. We note with satisfaction that after a number of productive sessions by the United Nations/Organization of African Unity Group of Experts, a draft African nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaty is in the process of being finalized. The verification role envisaged for the Agency in the draft treaty reflects confidence in its safeguards system, as well as our appreciation of the benefits that an assured peaceful use of nuclear energy would bring for our development. Similar verification functions would be assigned to the Agency under the proposed comprehensive test-ban treaty as well as the cut-off convention called for by the Assembly in its resolution last year. The Agency's proven expertise, accumulated over the years, will serve us all well in confronting those challenges.

A safe, well-regulated nuclear industry is indispensable for the security and well-being of peoples of all States. Nigeria has therefore welcomed well-conceived measures by Member States to strengthen nuclear safety world-wide. The unanimous adoption of the Convention on Nuclear Safety at a diplomatic conference in Vienna last June represents one such initiative, and my country was one of the first signatories of that Convention in the course of the thirty-eighth

session of the IAEA General Conference. As an incentive Convention, it appears to have modest goals. However, the international community can, and indeed must, build upon this achievement and complete the negotiation of a nuclear liability convention which will establish a new international liability regime. That would increase public confidence in the nuclear industry.

As one of the countries which have subscribed to the code of practice on the international movement of radioactive waste, my country appreciates ongoing efforts to evaluate the health and environmental risks posed by the dumping of high-level radioactive wastes in the Arctic Ocean. The Agency's programme of strengthening waste management practices within national boundaries should be complemented at the international level by cooperation to frustrate continuing attempts by unscrupulous merchants of death to dump radioactive wastes and toxic substances in the high seas. Closely related is the urgent need to confront the new trend in the trafficking of nuclear materials. We are encouraged that at the last General Conference member States identified some measures to be taken to combat this phenomenon. It is our hope that this common resolve will enable us to find a long-term solution to the problem of nuclear waste, for which the time is indeed ripe.

The Agency needs to adapt its principal policy-making organs to the demands of our times. Conceived at the height of the cold war, the provisions of its Statute governing representation on the Board of Governors need urgent revision to reflect new and important developments and the expansion in the membership of the Agency. We urge member States not to allow current divergences of approach to the subject to detract from the merit of a solution that will make the Agency inclusive as well as address the deserved case of the African region.

Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran): The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran notes with satisfaction the annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for 1993, which summarizes the significant achievements of the Agency during the year in question. We thank Mr. Blix, the Director General of the IAEA, for his thorough and informative statement featuring the progress as well as the challenges in the activities of the Agency during the year. Director General Blix and the IAEA secretariat are to be commended for the commitment and dedication with which they carry out their responsibilities.

We have given serious consideration to the Agency's report for 1993. It is very unfortunate that the Agency continues to operate under financial constraints which in turn have had adverse effects on some of its important programmes. We urge member States to take their financial obligations more seriously and to make their payments in a timely manner. At the same time, we believe that in view of the present budgetary constraints the key objective should be cost-effectiveness.

Another issue in the activities of the Agency during this period has been the development of a strengthened safeguards regime. Iran, as an original signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), has always adhered to the Agency's safeguards and will continue to support their effectiveness. Our Government has pursued an open and transparent policy in this respect, and, based on this policy, took the initiative to invite the Agency twice to visit the nuclear facilities in Iran and to verify their peaceful utilization. Subsequently IAEA missions visited Iran in February 1992 and November 1993, and verifications were established to the satisfaction of the Agency.

We commend the efforts of the Agency in enhancing nuclear safety and radiation protection, particularly in the countries of the former USSR. In this regard, a matter of great concern for Middle Eastern countries is the continued operation of the unsafeguarded, antiquated and entirely non-peaceful Dimona nuclear reactor in Israel. We call upon the international community, and the IAEA in particular, to address this problem urgently and effectively.

It should be recalled that it was only South Africa's accession to the NPT and the IAEA safeguards regime which made the African nuclear-weapon-free zone a reality. A parallel exists in the case of the Middle East. As long as Israel, with the full support of certain Powers, refuses to accede to the NPT and the IAEA safeguards regime, the Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone remains a distant goal. In this respect, the decision of the thirty-eighth session of the General Conference of the IAEA to restore technical assistance to Israel is nothing but a reward to a nuclear proliferator and tacit approval of that regime's access to nuclear weapons. Iran, as a country that in 1974 initiated the proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, continues to support that initiative and is prepared to consider any constructive idea for its realization under United Nations auspices.

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to international cooperation in the peaceful application of nuclear energy and has pursued with great interest the Agency's promotional role in this field. My delegation appreciates the useful technical cooperation the Agency extends to member States in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the field of agriculture, industry and medicine.

However, exceptional cases of the violation of IAEA safeguards in the recent past have provided an excuse for certain nuclear-weapon States and some other industrialized countries to undermine the statutory tasks and obligations of the Agency and to infringe more than before upon the inalienable rights of the parties to the NPT, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, whose modest peaceful nuclear activities have always been approved by the Agency.

The 1995 NPT review and extension Conference provides a good opportunity to address the violations of the provisions of the Treaty by a number of nuclear-weapon States and other industrialized countries. We hope that the IAEA and the United Nations Secretariat, based on the decision of the Preparatory Committee for the 1995 review and extension Conference, will prepare comprehensive documents on the implementation of the provisions of the preambular and operative parts of the NPT.

In conclusion, allow me once again to extend our appreciation of and support for the IAEA in its efforts to promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Hou Zhitong (China)*(interpretation from Chinese):* The Chinese delegation has listened attentively to the statement made by Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and has taken note of the Agency's annual report.

In the past year the IAEA has done useful work and achieved some success in promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in preventing nuclear proliferation. The Chinese delegation wishes to express its appreciation for the contributions made by the States members of the IAEA and to its Director General, Mr. Blix, and the Agency's secretariat.

The international community welcomes the conclusion of the International Convention on Nuclear Safety. It is hoped that the Convention will play an important role in maintaining the safety of nuclear facilities and promote international cooperation in nuclear safety and radiological protection.

We are also pleased to note that with the support of Member States the financial situation of the IAEA has taken a favourable turn as the result of the overall increases of resources allocated in particular to technical assistance and cooperation. This is undoubtedly conducive to the economic and social development of developing Member States. It is also heartening to note that an increasing number of Member States are turning to the IAEA for help in formulating their energy and nuclear-power plans and in conducting feasibility studies.

Meanwhile, it is commendable that the IAEA has provided assistance in the area of nuclear safety to some countries in Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, with tangible results. In order to increase the effectiveness of the safeguards system the IAEA secretariat is now devoting its efforts to the developments and experiments of the "93+2" programme. It is our hope that that programme will achieve its intended effects.

Notwithstanding this, it is obvious to the international community that the imbalance between the promotional and regulatory functions of the IAEA still exists and that many of the legitimate aspirations and demands of the many developing Member States have failed to receive adequate attention. The Chinese delegation hopes that the IAEA will conduct more consultations with those countries and work out with them a development strategy for technical assistance and ways and means to achieve cooperation in order to facilitate effective international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

China has always stood for a complete ban on and total destruction of nuclear weapons and an early realization of a nuclear-weapon-free world. China, as a contracting party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and a State member of the IAEA, has made positive contributions to the prevention of nuclear proliferation and the promotion of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Chinese Government maintains that all nuclear-weapon States should unconditionally declare their intention not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and should immediately negotiate and conclude a treaty to that effect and that all nuclear-weapon States should undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The Chinese Government also supports the adoption of a convention on a complete ban on all nuclear weapons, under which all nuclear-weapon States will commit themselves to the total destruction of their nuclear weapons.

It is China's consistent position that, in addition to efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation and promote nuclear disarmament, efforts should also be made actively to enhance international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. China is in favour of strengthening the safeguards system by improving its effectiveness and efficiency. However, the related measures should be fair, objective, reasonable, transparent, practical and in strict compliance with the IAEA Statutes and relevant international legal instruments so as to ensure that the sovereignty of States is respected and their rights and obligations balanced.

The Chinese Government has always attached great importance to its cooperation with the Agency. In addition to paying its contributions in due time, China has also made donations. In order to support the Agency in its technical assistance to and cooperation with developing countries, the Chinese Government has decided to donate an additional sum of $1 million to the Agency.

The firm policy of the Chinese Government is to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to make nuclear energy better serve China's economic and social development and benefit the Chinese people. China's nuclear-power industry has entered a new stage of development. The Qinshan 300-megawatt nuclear-power station had started operation, and the second phase of that project is under full construction. Guangdong's Daya Bay nuclear-power station has also started commercial operation. It is estimated that by the year 2000 China will have developed several more nuclear-power stations with a total generating capacity of 8,000 to 10,000 megawatts. In its development of its nuclear-power industry, China will continue to take an active part in mutually beneficial international cooperation.

Peace and development are the common goals of the people of all countries in the world. In this connection the international community has great expectations of the Agency. China is prepared to work with other countries for the smooth performance of the Agency's important missions and to make new contributions to peace and development.

Mr. Pak Gil Yon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The fundamental resolution of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula is of great importance in defusing the tensions and establishing a lasting peace on the Korean peninsula.

The nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula is a political and military issue to be resolved bilaterally by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America, in view of the background of its origin, its nature and its substance.

It is from this point of view that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has maintained its consistent position that the nuclear issue should be resolved through dialogue and negotiations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States.

As is already known, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea declared its withdrawal from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in accordance with the relevant paragraph of the Treaty by exercising its sovereignty. However, we suspended its implementation when the United States requested us to do so during the first round of the talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States. This has accordingly placed our country in a special status.

Since we have stated the background details on several occasions in the past, I wish to avoid further elaboration of this issue.

We have made sincere, good-faith efforts to resolve the nuclear issue with magnanimity, even under our special status. We made arrangements for a sufficient number of inspections by the IEAE necessary for the continuation of the safeguards and even permitted, last May, additional inspections commensurate with our special status.

However, some elements of the IAEA abused our good faith and our magnanimity, thus displaying ever-greater partiality and placed more pressure upon us, thereby creating difficulties and complications in the resolution of the issue. Worse still, they forced us to open military sites, insisting upon a "special inspection", and went as far as to enforce the adoption of the resolution on sanctions against our country at the meeting last June of the IAEA's Board of Governors, despite opposition from many countries.

Such attempts led us to conclude that the pressure against our country would continue to increase and that our peaceful nuclear activities would be impeded if we continued to remain tied to the partial framework of the IAEA.

The forcible adoption of the unreasonable "resolution on sanctions" against our country constitutes a gross infringement of the dignity and sovereignty of our Republic, which holds independence as dear as life itself. Our people will not tolerate any humiliation at the expense of national sovereignty and dignity. Therefore, on June 13 of this year, we took the step of withdrawing from the IAEA.

Even after withdrawing from the IAEA, we have maintained our consistent stand that a negotiated solution should be sought to the nuclear issue through talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America, not through confrontation, in response to the desires and expectations of the peace-loving peoples of the world.

Comrade Kim Il Sung, the great leader of our people, in his meeting with Mr. Jimmy Carter, former President of the United States, when he visited our country in June this year, said that confidence-building between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America had been vital to the resolution of the nuclear issue. In addition, he put forward an important proposal for bridging the impasse between the two countries and fundamentally resolving the nuclear issue.

Accordingly, we allowed Agency inspectors to remain and to continue the inspections necessary for the continuation of the safeguards. The Director General of the Agency referred to this in his report to the September meeting of the Board of Governors of the IAEA.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States reached an agreement on the clear and final objectives of resolving the nuclear issue and other outstanding issues at the third round of the talks held between the two countries held in Geneva on 12 August 1994. One of the important points of the agreement is that we expressed our willingness to freeze our graphite-moderated reactors - the foundation of our independent nuclear-power industry - and that the United States committed itself to arranging to provide appropriate light-water reactors and commensurate compensation for the loss of energy sources resulting from the freeze on our recent graphite-moderated reactors.

The United States also expressed its willingness to discontinue its nuclear threats and hostile acts against our country, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States agreed to establish diplomatic representation in each other's capitals and to reduce barriers to trade and investment, as a move towards full normalization of political and economic relations.

Our willingness to freeze graphite-moderated reactors is an expression of our firm pledge to resolve the nuclear issue and a demonstration of the transparency and credibility of our denuclearization policy, which is aimed at the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

After the announcement of the agreed statement, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States held expert-level talks in Pyongyang and Berlin, respectively, in early September and are continuing their ongoing negotiations, thus moving towards the actual implementation of the agreed statement.

The world has now recognized that the talks and negotiations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States are the only means of resolving the nuclear issue, and it welcomed the agreed statement between the two countries, looking forward to fruitful results in the process of the talks and negotiations.

We have no doubt that, if the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States implement the agreed statement in good faith, this will build confidence between the two countries and eventually lead to the effective resolution of the nuclear issue and other outstanding issues, to be followed by an easing of tensions on the Korean peninsula and by epoch-making progress in ensuring peace and security in Asia and the rest of the world.

Some circles, however, that still retain outdated concepts and the mentality of the cold war, have attempted to renew the pressure against us. They placed the so-called nuclear issue - unreasonably - on the agenda of the thirty-eighth General Conference of the IAEA, held last September, and forced the adoption of the "resolution" despite opposition from many countries. Furthermore, we find it annoying that they are trying to adopt a resolution on the "nuclear issue", clamouring about the "transparency of past nuclear activities", a "return to the NPT" and a "special inspection", even at this meeting to consider the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Such acts will only help create

obstacles in the ongoing talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States and aggravate the tensions on the Korean peninsula. This "nuclear issue" of ours, in view of its character, is not an issue to be considered at the United Nations.

The United Nations should question the partiality of the IAEA and its application of a double standard that compelled the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to pull out of the NPT and even to withdraw from the Agency, if it wishes to discuss the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula. This notwithstanding, any attempt to adopt a resolution in this United Nations forum, while disregarding our sincere efforts, would be a totally unreasonable act, detrimental to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

Therefore, we strongly denounce the adoption of a resolution as an insidious political offensive aimed at increasing international pressure against us. It is being claimed that the attempts to adopt a resolution at this session, followed by the thirty-eighth General Conference of the IAEA, are a reflection of the will of the international community. However, this is nothing but a pretext to cover up, in the name of the international community, the political purposes of a few countries.

Such unreasonable acts on the part of some countries are designed to trample the sovereignty of other countries and nations, and are based on the idea of maximizing their interests. Therefore, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will never recognize such acts as the will of the international community.

We hold that this sacred forum, where peace-loving, independent and sovereign States come together to discuss the ways and means of accomplishing a noble desire of humankind, should not be used as a political tool by some countries bent on dominating and stifling small and weak countries. Anyone who has a sincere desire to see the nuclear issue resolved should not resort to pressure but should encourage the talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America and implementation of the agreed statement by those two countries.

The adoption of a resolution against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at this meeting will only create complications and difficulties in the process of the bilateral talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America and, furthermore, bring the nuclear issue back to the original state of confrontation. Therefore we demand that the paragraphs in draft resolution A/49/L.2 that could be an obstacle to these talks be deleted and be replaced with paragraphs welcoming the agreed statement between the two countries and encouraging its full implementation.

Having reiterated our position, we express our expectation that representatives hoping for a negotiated and peaceful solution to the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula will give our position their full support.

I should like to make a few remarks on the statements made by the representatives of the German, Hungarian and other delegations.

The whole process of talks and negotiations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States clearly indicates that the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula can be resolved only through dialogue and negotiation and that any pressure put on one party to the dialogue could create difficulties and complications in the proceedings - even return the nuclear issue to the original state of confrontation. It should be clearly understood that ordinary military sites cannot be the object of special inspection and that any attempt at such inspection would constitute a flagrant violation of the sovereignty and supreme interests of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Furthermore, we have never accepted, and will never accept, the right to special inspection of military sites in the future. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will never sell off its interests under pressure.

Anyone who is really interested in finding a solution to the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula and to the question of the maintenance of peace and security in Asia and the rest of the world should not support blindly the power politics of the big countries. Rather, they should take a fair stand that is conducive to resolution of the issue, encourage the parties concerned to achieve agreement at the earliest possible moment and refrain from any attempt to introduce obstacles to the process of the ongoing talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America.

I should like to make a few points in response to the statement made by the representative of Japan.

It is well known that Japan is one of the few countries that are expediting their nuclear programmes even since the end of the cold war. The world is now

seriously concerned about the stockpiling of a large quantity of plutonium by Japan. According to data released by the Japanese Science and Technology Agency, it has already stockpiled 1.6 tonnes of plutonium at home and 2.9 tonnes abroad and by the year 2010 will possess 50 tonnes - a quantity large enough to make more than 6,200 nuclear bombs.

The annual capacity of Japan's reprocessing plant is 800 tonnes - the largest in the world. By the end of the present century Japan will rank third in the world - after the United States and France - in reprocessing capacity. It is an open secret that Japan has already developed not only an electronic detonating device and other components for the manufacture of nuclear bombs and for associated technology but also the means of long-range nuclear delivery, which could be used as intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Japan's undisguised ambition in the field of nuclear armaments is more clearly revealed in an official document that was submitted to the International Court of Justice. In this document the Japanese Government overtly asserts that the use of nuclear weapons does not contravene international law. This means that Japan would not hesitate to inflict a nuclear holocaust on humankind.

All these facts indicate that Japan's progress in the field of nuclear armaments has reached a dangerous pace. Japan's acceleration in this field is creating an obstacle to the process of denuclearizing the Korean peninsula, and it poses a grave threat not only to regional peace and security but also to the international non-proliferation system.

For those reasons it is the view not just of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea but of the world that Japan is not entitled to talk about other countries' activities in the nuclear field. Japan's forcing of the issue in respect of the nuclear issue concerning our country is a clumsy and desperate attempt to direct the world's attention away from its nuclear-armaments programme to other issues. Therefore my delegation strongly urges Japan to make public and to abandon its nuclear-armaments scheme and to invite the International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect its undeclared nuclear activities, instead of trying to meddle in other issues.

I am compelled to refer to the statement on the nuclear issue made by the representative of South Korea. Although the South Korean authorities have no power at all with regard to resolution of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula, it is hopelessly in a hurry to meddle in that process, not knowing where to sit and where to stand. The South Korean authorities are clamouring for inter-Korean dialogue to be held before the talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America. The point is being made that thermal power stations should be provided instead of light-water reactors, and that clarification of past nuclear activities should be a precondition to the provision of light-water reactors. The aim is to block progress in the talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America.

Recent activities of the South Korean authorities are intended, by all means, to continue their development of nuclear weapons while poking their noses into the talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America, with the sole aim of obstructing them. It is an open secret that South Korea is now developing nuclear weapons under the patronage of the United States and some other Western countries. South Korea has already stockpiled a great quantity of plutonium, has concluded a contract on its importation with the United Kingdom and France and - worse still - has recently brought a heavy-water reactor into operation. It should refrain from any attempt to block the talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United Sates of America, even if it is not happy with the ongoing process.

We believe that resolution of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula through the talks that are under way, which are now going in the right direction, would be beneficial to South Korea as well as to the entire Korean people. It is from this point of view that I urge the South Korean authorities to implement fully the Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, make known to the international community its plan for the development of nuclear weapons, and accept IAEA inspections.

I also urge the South Korean authorities to act in the interests of our nation, in a spirit of national independence - discarding its dependence on foreign forces and on confrontation between the North and the South of Korea.

The President (*interpretation from French*): A number of representatives have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I remind members that, pursuant to decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention

and five minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Takahashi (Japan): The arguments raised by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with regard to Japan are totally groundless and cannot be regarded as anything but vicious propaganda. Japan, which is poor in energy resources, utilizes nuclear fuel that is extracted by processing plutonium from spent fuel. By doing so, Japan anticipates that it will be able to maintain a stable supply of energy through nuclear-power generation. It remains committed to handling the waste contained in spent fuel in a safe and appropriate manner. Japan uses such materials strictly for peaceful purposes and in accordance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and with domestic laws and regulations.

The peaceful use of atomic energy in Japan is also guaranteed and verified by the IAEA's comprehensive safeguards. Furthermore, Japan strictly upholds its three non-nuclear principles of not possessing or producing nuclear weapons or introducing them into its territory. That Japan would develop and possess nuclear weapons is inconceivable.

Again, we urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to implement the full-scope safeguards agreement immediately.

Mr. Chong-Ha Yoo (Republic of Korea): I shall confine my statement in exercise of the right of reply to essential matters. Most of the statement that the representative of the DPRK made does not, in my view, deserve a response. I would like to say that the Republic of Korea is supportive of the negotiations being carried out in Geneva between the DPRK and the United States of America.

With regard to nuclear facilities, materials and activities in the Republic of Korea, we want to reiterate that all these facilities and activities are under full-scope inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in accordance with the safeguards agreement concluded between the IAEA and the Republic of Korea; therefore, complete transparency with regard to their peaceful nature is guaranteed.

We should like to state again that the Government of the Republic of Korea is fully committed to the South-North Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula signed between the DPRK and the Republic of Korea in 1991.

Mr. Kim Jae Hom (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The South Korean authorities, who have no say at all about foreign nuclear weapons deployed on their own land, are now harping on the nuclear issue. This is nothing but dishonest behaviour by those who feel frustration over their poor position of being inched out of the way of the talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America and who are attempting to poke their noses into those talks with a view to putting the brakes on the talks by any means.

It is truly ironic that those who have yet to pay an external debt equivalent to several tens of billions are talking about assistance to other countries. It would be better for the South Korean authorities to refrain from pouring cold water on the process of the talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America, but rather to open to the public their secret nuclear programme and scrap it, and to take an independent position not relying on outside forces.

Regarding the remarks by Japan, I urge the Japanese delegation not to make poor excuses. I urge Japan to give up its wild ambition to become a nuclear Power and a military Power.

Mr. Takahashi (Japan): I would like to reiterate my previous statement that the arguments raised by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with regard to Japan are totally groundless and cannot be regarded as anything but vicious propaganda. It is futile for the DPRK to attempt to allay the suspicions of the international community about its nuclear activities. We urge North Korea not to waste time by engaging in meaningless arguments and propaganda.

Mr. Kim Jae Hom (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Regarding the Japanese remarks, I once again call upon Japan not to make poor excuses in this Assembly. I urge Japan to give up its wild, big nuclear schemes, and to give up its wild ambition to lecture other Asian countries. Otherwise, Japan will not enjoy a place in the international community.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I would like to inform members that action on the draft resolution on agenda item 14 will be taken at the afternoon meeting on Wednesday, 19 October 1994.

Programme of work

The President *(interpretation from French):* I would also like to inform members that the General Assembly will take up agenda item 152, entitled "Observer status for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the General Assembly," at the afternoon meeting on Wednesday, 19 October 1994.

Agenda item 151

Observer status for the South Pacific Forum in the General Assembly

Draft resolution (A/49/L.1)

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the representative of Australia to introduce draft resolution A/49/L.1.

Mr. Butler (Australia): As this is the first occasion on which I have come to the rostrum under your presidency, Sir, may I renew the warm congratulations expressed to you by my Foreign Minister, Senator Evans, when he spoke in the Assembly on 3 October 1994.

In Australia's capacity as Chair of the South Pacific Forum for 1994-1995, it is my honour to introduce, on behalf of the sponsors, the draft resolution contained in document A/49/L.1 of 11 October 1994, under which the General Assembly would decide to invite the South Pacific Forum to participate in the sessions and work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer.

The draft resolution has been sponsored on behalf of the South Pacific Forum by the nine States members of the Forum that are also Members of the United Nations - namely Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Western Samoa.

Those sponsors have been joined by 99 other Member States as co-sponsors. The list of sponsors is contained in document A/49/L.1; to the list should be added Brunei Darussalam, Croatia, Gabon, Madagascar and Pakistan. This makes a total of 113 Member States sponsoring the draft resolution. On behalf of all the members of the South Pacific Forum, I wish to thank the co-sponsors, which represent all the regions of the world, for their strong and positive support of the South Pacific Forum's request for observer status.

The South Pacific Forum, which first met in 1971, is the political grouping of the 15 independent or self-governing States in the South Pacific. It meets annually, at Heads of Government level, to develop collective responses on a wide range of regional issues, including trade, economic development, civil aviation and maritime issues, telecommunications, energy, and political and security matters. In addition, the South Pacific Forum maintains a dialogue, following each Heads of Government meeting, with a number of external Governments and organizations.

The South Pacific Forum is supported by the Forum secretariat, which has its headquarters in Suva, Fiji, and was first established as an international organization pursuant to the 1973 Agreement establishing the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Cooperation. The Forum secretariat is headed by a secretary-general, and it is a very great honour to have with us today the Honourable Ieremia Tabai, the current Secretary-General, who has come to New York for the consideration of the Forum's request for observer status.

The Forum is seeking observer status at the General Assembly on terms similar to those that have been prescribed in respect of other associations of States. The decision taken by the South Pacific Forum at its meeting in Brisbane, Australia, in August this year to seek observer status at the General Assembly reflects the commitment by the Governments of the States members of this regional organization to develop a closer relationship with the United Nations.

Since its inception, the Forum has played a vital role in promoting closer cooperation and consideration of a range of issues of direct relevance to the South Pacific region and beyond. The range of issues currently on the Forum's agenda - issues that are also on the global agenda - are indicated in the communiqué that was adopted by the Heads of State and Government following the Brisbane meeting. This communiqué has been circulated as General Assembly document A/49/381.

The theme for the 1994 Forum was "Managing our Resources". This encompassed consideration of the development of human resources in the region, managing forestry resources and their exploitation, the development of fisheries and their associated industries, land-use concerns and their relationship to sustainable development, and the growth of tourism.

The Forum also focused on the need to adopt a global perspective in regard to the development of economic policies; the importance of environmental issues in the Pacific region, such as climate change and sea level rise; biodiversity conservation; and effective implementation in the Pacific region of the recommendations of the Programme of Action of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

An important outcome of the Forum was the endorsement of the report of a ministerial working group on the review of the Forum's processes and procedures, including the agreement that the Secretary-General of the Forum should work more actively in developing relations between the Forum and the United Nations, as well as with the group of countries of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Council and the Association of South-East Asian Nations.

The communiqué reflects the recognition by the Heads of State and Government of the member States that the Forum must on the one hand adapt and diversify its external relations in light of the far-reaching changes that have occurred in the international environment, and on the other realize the potential for greater cooperation with the United Nations that the Forum can offer through attaining observer status.

As a regional organization, the South Pacific Forum wishes to strengthen its relationship with the United Nations. It also attaches high importance to supporting the special interests of the smaller island States. Observer status for the South Pacific Forum will, in this regard, provide a means of contributing to and cooperating with the United Nations system for all the 15 members of the Forum.

I therefore request, on behalf of the 113 sponsors, that the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution that would grant observer status for the South Pacific Forum in the General Assembly.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I should like to inform the Assembly that Madagascar has joined the list of sponsors of the draft resolution.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/49/L.1. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/49/L.1 was adopted (resolution 49/1).

The President *(interpretation from French):* I call on the representative of Canada, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States.

Ms. Fréchette (Canada): On behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, I would like to welcome the South Pacific Forum as a Permanent Observer in the General Assembly.

In seeking this status for the Forum, its member States and Governments have made clear their desire to strengthen the Forum's relationship with the United Nations and to intensify cooperation in areas which are of particular interest to the South Pacific region. Such an area is that of the sustainable development of small island States. It seems fitting that we should welcome the South Pacific Forum as an Observer during a session which will discuss an issue to which the Forum attaches such high importance. We have no doubt that the South Pacific Forum will make a valuable contribution to the work of the Organization on this and other issues of mutual interest.

On behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, I extend to the South Pacific Forum a most cordial welcome. We look forward to fruitful and effective cooperation with our new Permanent Observer.

The President: I call on the representative of Samoa, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. Slade (Samoa): Since this is the first time I have spoken here, I want to add the voice of my delegation to the many tributes paid you, Sir, and the admiration expressed upon your election as President of the General Assembly.

It is a particular honour for Samoa, as Chairman of the Group of Asian States for the month of October, to extend on behalf of the Group our warmest congratulations to the South Pacific Forum upon its admission to the General Assembly in the capacity of Observer.

The resolution the Assembly has just adopted, which enjoys the unanimous support of the States Members of the United Nations, is the measure of the Assembly's

esteem and respect. It is an acknowledgement, too, of the response by the South Pacific Forum countries to the call by the United Nations for a more active dialogue and closer cooperation between the United Nations system and regional organizations.

As a member of the South Pacific Forum, Samoa is particularly pleased to note the strong support for the resolution from the States members of our Asian Group, many of which have worked closely with my delegation and other States members of the South Pacific Forum, not only here at the United Nations but also in many other international forums and regional United Nations bodies in the Asia and Pacific region.

Many of the Asian Group's small developing States are in the Pacific region or in close proximity to it. We see in the observer status granted to the Forum today significant prospects for the further strengthening of regional contributions by small developing States towards the processes of global consensus-building now taking place on critical issues affecting the environment, population, poverty, trade and other areas of our work. All these will require effective and efficient coordination, such as between the United Nations and the regional bodies.

By the outcome of a number of conferences - in Rio, in other places and most recently in Barbados - the world community has assigned tasks of magnitude and importance to the regional intergovernmental organizations. It is right, therefore, that on this occasion we acknowledge to the Forum, as we do to other like organizations, the vital roles they play in the implementation of global strategies to combat global problems within the framework of the United Nations system, now and beyond the turn of the century.

Within the Asia and Pacific region, the South Pacific Forum and the States members of the Forum have worked closely on issues of common concern with their Asian members, within the context of the United Nations under such regional bodies as the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) as well as with economic groupings such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). The direct participation and involvement of the Forum in the work of the General Assembly will assuredly contribute to the success of these common endeavours.

Let me, on behalf of the Asian Group, congratulate the South Pacific Forum again and to extend to the Secretary-General of the Forum, His Excellency Mr. Ieremia Tabai, a warm welcome and the good wishes of our membership.

The President: I call on the representative of the Czech Republic, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Rovensky (Czech Republic): On behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, allow me to congratulate warmly the South Pacific Forum on the occasion of its being granted observer status in the General Assembly. We welcome this decision, and we appreciate the fact that the relevant resolution has been adopted without a vote.

We are sure that this is an expression of the belief of the Member States that the South Pacific Forum's contribution to the General Assembly's work will be substantial and that it will benefit the overall effort of the General Assembly to increase the effectiveness of its work.

The Eastern European Group's members, 10 of which sponsored the resolution granting observer status to the South Pacific forum, are looking forward to our future cooperation with the Forum at the United Nations.

The President: In accordance with the resolution just adopted, I now call on the Secretary-General of the South Pacific Forum, the Honourable Ieremia Tabai.

Mr. Tabai (South Pacific Forum): It is a great privilege to be here today to represent the South Pacific Forum as it takes for the first time a seat as an observer in the General Assembly. I must first express, on behalf of the members of the Forum, our gratitude for the honour the Assembly has extended to our organization and to the South Pacific region in adopting the resolution granting us observer status. This is indeed a historic event for us, marking another milestone for our small organization as it tries to expand its role in representing the joint interests of its 15 members in the international arena. We deeply appreciate the support and understanding that Members of the United Nations have demonstrated in adopting this resolution.

The United Nations is, of course, an Organization of immense and growing importance to all members of the international community. But it is, I think, of particular importance to the smaller island States. Its existence and programmes can help guarantee our peace and security and promote our economic and social

development in ways which we are too small to manage entirely for ourselves.

And most of the 15 members of the South Pacific Forum are very small indeed. Although our countries extend over a vast area of ocean, their total population is only about 25 million. A number of our smaller members have populations of only a few thousand. Despite these limitations of size and resources, however, I think that the Forum has established a solid track record in the nearly quarter of a century of its existence of effective regional cooperation. The Forum, as was mentioned earlier, was set up in 1971 as a result of the desire of the independent countries of the region to tackle common concerns from a regional perspective and to enhance their collective regional voice so as to give their views greater weight in the international community. It is now the pre-eminent political grouping in our part of the world and has a formal ministerial dialogue process annually with our major international partners. Our acceptance as an observer into the United Nations marks another and very important step forward for the Forum's international links.

Our desire to be part of the United Nations process stems not only from the South Pacific Forum's own growing contribution in representing the region's collective concerns in a rapidly changing global environment, but also from our support for the expanded and invigorated role being played by the United Nations in the post-cold-war world. We greatly welcome that, and in particular the greater emphasis that is now being placed by the Secretary-General on cooperation in the United Nations work programme with regional organizations.

We do, of course, have much existing cooperation with the United Nations specialized and regional agencies. This is, and will remain, very valuable to our region, and we will continue to try to strengthen these links. But we are very interested also in the many new areas of work and new developments in old areas where previously the constraints of the cold war's international framework had prevented progress. We have noted and greatly welcomed, for example, the Secretary-General's Agenda for Peace. The Forum has in particular a long-standing position of vigorous support for disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, and opposition to nuclear testing. Our region has direct and recent experience of the hazards of such testing.

We also welcomed the convening of the Conference on Population and Development last month. Although our populations in the South Pacific are in absolute terms small, they are in a number of our countries growing at some of the highest rates in the world. Population densities are already very high in some of our atoll countries in particular and are putting immense pressure on our fragile marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

For this same reason, we have a deep interest in the United Nations growing environmental programme. Forum members have participated actively in the development of the agenda stemming from the Rio Conference two years ago and in the newly launched work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Barbados earlier this year, was particularly important in that regard.

Development and its sustainability are critical issues for our region. From the earliest days of the South Pacific Forum, the question of economic growth and how to achieve it in small island countries with limited resources has been high on our agenda. It is still the most important single problem for all of us and is increasingly linked to sound environmental management because of the fragility of the resource base in most of our countries. The United Nations Agenda for Development is of vital interest to us.

These are only a few examples of current areas of the United Nations work which are of immense interest to the South Pacific Forum and which have prompted us to seek observer status. Nine of our members are Members of the United Nations in their own right. They are active participants in the work of the General Assembly and will continue to be. Six members of the Forum, however, do not belong to the United Nations. Observer status for the South Pacific Forum will be particularly significant for them in increasing their access to advice and information from the United Nations system in these sorts of areas of great importance to all countries of our region.

The Forum hopes that taking up observer status in the General Assembly is a useful initial step in responding to the Secretary-General's invitation to regional organizations to consider ways and means to improve coordination of effort with the United Nations. We know it will require a real effort on our part to turn this institutional mechanism into substantive cooperation and consultation. I can assure the Assembly that, within the constraints of the resources of a small organization, the South Pacific Forum intends to play as active and

constructive a role as possible as an observer, in accord with the strong support of all our members for the ideals and objectives of the United Nations.

I thank the Assembly again most sincerely for admitting the South Pacific Forum to observer status and for allowing me to make this short statement.

The President *(interpretation from French):* May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 151?

It was so decided.

Organization of work

The President (*interpretation from French*): I should like to remind representatives of the need for punctuality, as I intend to begin our work tomorrow at 10 a.m. and not a minute later.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.